

THE COVENANTER.

NOVEMBER, 1845.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND from the Introduction of Christianity to the period of the Disruption, in 1843. By the Rev. W. M. HETHERINGTON, A.M., Torpichen. 8vo. pp. 500. New York: Robert Carter. 1844.

(Continued from page 76.)

THIS, we have already said, is an excellent work. One which should be in every household. It is succinct, perspicuous, eloquent, and marked, in no common degree, with uprightness, impartiality, and an evangelical spirit. Its author deserves no meagre commendations. He has produced a work that will live, and go down to posterity. Still, this history is not faultless, nor is Mr. Hetherington's character, as a historian, perfect. We have already noticed and commented upon some of his insinuations against Sir Robert Hamilton and those with whom he acted from the era of the battle of Bothwell Bridge. Our animadversions have been the more pointed on account of the highly respectable and influential quarter whence these misrepresentations come. The assaults of the Tory and the Moderate, upon these sterling and unyielding opponents of arbitrary power and ecclesiastical corruption we anticipate and can afford to disregard. But when a writer like Hetherington—so friendly to the "good old cause,"—so evangelical in his sentiments—so fair, in general, in his statements—utters even an insinuation, it has the stamp of authority upon it, and must be noticed. To pass it by, is to admit it. Hence, we have endeavoured, and, in the main, by adducing our author's own authority against himself, to free the followers of Cameron, Cargill, &c., from the charge of pushing their principles to extremes—of being over-ardent and impetuous. We have shown that the most obnoxious of these doctrines, namely, that the perjured Stuarts had forfeited the crown, was embraced by the nation, although on less weighty and scriptural grounds, at the revolution in 1688. His fairness, we ought to add, in stating their principles, and his impartiality in deciding between them and the looser party, should go far in freeing Mr. Hetherington—if it does not entirely clear him—from the suspicion of a wilful design to do injustice to the "suffering remnant."

We now proceed to the Revolution Settlement, and our author's account of the conduct of the society people in reference to it. And here, again, we are obliged to differ from Mr. Hetherington. It is, however, but a difference of judgment, and in a slight degree only involves any charge of unfairness on the part of the historian. The society people, or the Covenanters, refused to incorporate with the church and nation

displaying, upon its cover, a flag, with the inscription "For Christ's Crown and Covenant," while the body of which it is the organ has abandoned the cause in which that flag was displayed by the martyrs of the seventeenth century, and, it is not too much to say, has cut loose, in doctrine and spirit, from the covenants of our fathers? Their motto, whether intentionally or not, is calculated to deceive. And, more. What claim to truth and honesty has a magazine which says, contrary to the most explicit historical evidence recorded in the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church—in the face of the personal knowledge of the leading New Lights, if not of the conductors of this magazine—and in defiance of the known convictions of all other denominations, can affirm that the "subject of the moral character of the United States government has been left undecided by the Reformed Presbyterian Church?" The effrontery of such a statement is most daring and reckless. The language of this Church's Testimony, penned by the late Dr. McLeod, and revised by himself and Rev. William Gibson, and issued with the signature of John Black, Clerk of Presbytery, (then the highest court in the church,) is, "*There are MORAL EVILS ESSENTIAL to the Constitution of the United States, which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system.*" Again, the Testimony says, "This Constitution is, notwithstanding its numerous excellencies, in many instances inconsistent, *oppressive, and IMPIOUS.*" This was in the year 1806. The writer was Dr. McLeod. It was the act of the supreme judicatory of the Church, and never was altered. And yet this periodical has, more than once, had the hardihood to affirm that the Reformed Presbyterian Church has left the question open and undecided. This can only be ascribed either to the most shameful ignorance, or entire recklessness of truth and fairness.

 ADDRESS ON MISSIONS.

To the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States.

BRETHREN,—At the last meeting of Synod, a committee was appointed to select an appropriate station for a foreign mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and to employ a suitable person, already known in the service of the Church, to explore the region so selected, and to report to Synod the result.

The committee, after mature deliberation, selected the West Indies, and the coloured population there, as the missionary region to be explored, beginning with the island of Hayti; and have nominated Rev. J. B. Johnston to the service of entering upon a personal examination of the sphere selected. It is contemplated that, if he accept the appointment, he enter upon that work in the autumn of the ensuing year. Time is thus given for ample preparation, and to spread before the churches this incipient effort to propagate the gospel of the kingdom in foreign parts. To the subscriber has been deputed, by that committee, the office of addressing the church at large on this interesting subject, to call attention to its importance, and to obtain for it, first, an interest in their prayers, and then their free and liberal contributions for its support. As God, in his providence, shall have prospered them.

Deeply impressed with the importance of the service assigned me, I

enter upon it with a very painful diffidence, arising from a consciousness of great inability and lack of furniture, and from a fear lest I should fail in awakening your attention and concentrating your interest in this movement. Trusting, nevertheless, to the blessing of the Head of the church, and entertaining a good confidence in the zeal which has always distinguished Covenanters in the cause of our Redeemer, I entreat you to bear with me while I offer to your attention the following considerations.

1. Do not allow your minds to be biassed or diverted by the evil suggestion, that you have already done enough, and are already so charged that you can do no more. You bear a testimony, we admit, and occupy a position in the Christian church very onerous; your congregations, few, feeble, and scattered, compared with the denominations around you; your history here and in the isles of your forefathers, nevertheless, exhibits a readiness to endure, and to labour in the cause of truth, honourable to your profession. With means and resources comparatively limited, you find it difficult to do all you would to support the gospel in its administrations among yourselves. You may, therefore, be tempted to turn with reluctance to a claim on your devotions before God, and your pecuniary aid to his church in behalf of an effort so remote and foreign. But, consider; have you exhausted all the blessings to be obtained from a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God, in behalf of the gospel of his Son? Has the fountain run dry of promises, the fulfilling of which you have sought at the throne of grace? Open thine eyes, oh Christian, and you will perceive that there are yet large, very large communications of Divine compassion to them that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death, to be bestowed in blessing and prospering the word of life. And the same principle which binds you to unite the consecration of your substance with your prayers for its extension in the sphere in which you live yourselves, calls upon you to unite them in an effort to bear it in the same efficiency to your fellow men perishing for the word of life. Be persuaded that, in this respect, there is much to ask of God; that where there is much to ask for, and room for the contribution of your substance to his service, the same bounty which pours out spiritual blessings in answer to your prayers, will not fail also to bless and prosper "the basket and the store" from which has been devoted a portion to his service. "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed." "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully." It may be considered an indisputable maxim in the ordinary providence of the Most High, that judicious liberality in his service has never more wanted the means to maintain it, than true devotion has wanted the occasion, the matter and the answer of prayer. "Them that honour me I will honour." "Be not, therefore, brethren, weary in well doing."

2. Be excited to emulation by the efforts of your fellow Christians of other denominations, by whom you are surrounded. On all sides you hear and see the indications of their activity in diffusing among the benighted heathen such a knowledge of the gospel as they have attained themselves; giving time, attention, and substance, to circulate the word of life; and at home and abroad, in savage deserts, and in the isles of the ocean, the results of their labours are manifest in preparing the way of the Lord. What part, dear brethren, have you in conveying to

perishing sinners the salvation of God?—"in holding forth the word of life" to penetrate, with its divine radiance, the dark places of the earth filled with the habitations of horrid cruelty? Shall all the honour of promoting a cause so unspeakably precious; so infinitely excellent, be claimed by others, and none by you? While you possess attainments high in worth, and commended, too, by the sufferings of your forefathers, from whom you inherit them, shall you see the glorious banner of your Redeemer unfurled and borne to the benighted heathen without an effort to share in the distinction? A distinction the more worthy of your ambition, as it is to have part in the movements of a providence which shall ultimately give to our Redeemer "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Say not, the part you are capable of taking is too feeble and too small. The Most High measures not the gift by the amount, nor depends for the achievement of his designs on the greatness of the means. In his treasury, the widow's mite occupies a larger place than the costly contributions of the affluent,—in his doings, "the weak things of this world are employed to confound the mighty." Honour your Redeemer, therefore, with the assurance that your efforts, being done in faith, in obedience and in singleness of purpose to promote his glory, whatever proportion they may bear to others, will be owned, honoured, and prospered of Him.

3. Consider that the end proposed and the means to be employed are only scriptural and consonant to the law of the Lord our God. We, who are your servants for Jesus' sake, ask your prayers and your help in conveying to them that perish for lack of knowledge, no other than that same gospel which we minister to you, and you receive from us. It has, we admit, been an unhappy circumstance in the missionary enterprises of the age, that they have not been characterised by a sufficiently rigid attention either to the order of the house of God, or the purity of his gospel. Whilst we are most grateful that such part of divine truth is sent to lost sinners as may convey the name of Christ and the written oracles of life—whilst we honour the liberality and devotion by which they have been sustained, and regard with admiration and sympathy the many noble-minded heralds of the cross whose self-denial no privations could exhaust, whose patience no long-continued and incalculable sufferings could overcome, and whose courage no peril could appal—yet are we mournfully constrained to admit that much was of such a character as to forbid the parties in a witnessing remnant to take a prominent, active, and hearty co-operation. But here, brethren, no such difficulty exists, nor any cause for scruple or hesitation. We propose to send abroad no other than the same system of truth and order for which our forefathers faithfully contended and patiently suffered, and which we and you, under sanctions the most solemn, make it our study to preserve and transmit pure and entire. By all the considerations, then, by which it is endeared to you as the blood-bought inheritance of your noble-minded forefathers, as the infinitely precious truth of the Most High, as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; as it replenishes your own souls with "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" as it is your only guide through life, furnishing your only preparation for death, and then sealing on your heads "good hope through grace, and everlasting consolation," we invite and urge you to comfort and encourage us, by taking

part and giving help in this scriptural effort to extend the kingdom and promote the glory of our Redeemer.

And, finally, be assured, dear brethren; that, in this service, you are most reasonably encouraged with the expectation of an ample recompense of reward. We fondly hope it will prove a blessing to the whole church, and all her members, to be thus employed. "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Never was a service in the name of our glorious Head, but it was returned manifold. And has he left inscribed in the sacred legacy of divine truth with which his church is intrusted, this command, in which all have an interest as agents, or as helpers,—“Go, teach all nations,”—and shall we not believe that while she is employed in obeying that command, she shall experience the smiles of his approbation, and the tokens of his care? The people of the Lord, while straitened in their view and contracted in the objects of their attention, are in danger of being, like little children, pent up and confined,—fretfulness, impatience, and irritation are provoked by the very want of enlargedness of mind and of effort which they require.—As a most reasonable and scriptural result, it may be anticipated that the very devotion of your hearts, your prayers, your contributions, and your efforts to extend the kingdom of your Redeemer, will react upon yourselves, in healing and preventing strife, in promoting and strengthening brotherly love, and furnishing you, at home and abroad, augmented means, most interesting and excellent, to quicken and unite you in the service of God. Measure, if you please, the fruit of your labours in this matter by the most scanty standard which your faith will allow, and you will be gainers. Shall but one soul be rescued from sin and wrath, by our feeble and humble attempt—yet, remember that soul was the purchase of your Redeemer's blood; for that soul he laid down an infinitely precious price, and thought it gain so to purchase. And shall it not be esteemed, too, as gain by you? May you not hope that “the blessing of him that was ready to perish,” flowing from hearts and lips unknown to you in the flesh, shall yet, in numbers which we cannot tell, descend upon you, upon your children, and your children's children, to many generations? “Cast thy bread upon the waters, thou shalt find it after many days.”

These considerations we respectfully commend to your attention. Others, equally cogent, and more so, it is trusted, will be suggested to your minds, and stimulate you to action. And, in compliance with them, we ask your devout attention, in commending, in your prayers, this, we hope, godly enterprise, to the direction and blessing of the Head of the church—that the Holy Spirit, whose office is to call and send to the work, may, in this matter, and in due season, be heard saying, in the churches, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” to whom an answer shall be given, in holy readiness of mind, “Here am I, send me.”

Your contributions are required to meet the expense of employing one of your ministers, already named, in a voyage to explore and prepare the way, which may itself also furnish the opportunity for an incipient diffusion of the truth. The manner of such contributions is already indicated in the example of many of your congregations, and in the directions of Synod, to whose appointed officer they are to be transmitted. Their amount must be left to yourselves, only to follow, each

for himself, in the fear of God, the apostolic rule—"as God hath prospered him."*

And now we commend the whole matter to your devout consideration, and to the blessing of God,—and you, dear brethren, "to God himself, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified."

By order, and in behalf of, Synod's Committee.

JAMES CHRYSTIE.

New York, October, 1845.

A F F A I R S A B R O A D .

Ireland.—The popish tendencies of the Peel administration are awakening a lively opposition in Ireland, even among his former supporters. A "*monster*" meeting was held August 12th, at Lisburn, County Antrim, for the purpose of expressing the sympathies of the Protestant community with Mr. Watson, who had been summarily dismissed from the deputy-lieutenancy of the county for presiding at a meeting where resolutions were adopted for the reorganizing of the Orange institution. There were, according to different accounts, from 25,000 to 50,000 persons present, among them, some of the nobility, and a number of deputy-lieutenants and magistrates. The marquis of Downshire presided. The speeches were warm and energetic. An address to the queen was adopted, *complaining* "that their birthright as Britons was invaded, namely, liberty of private judgment; and that high-minded, honourable men were persecuted for asserting it, that the Protestant church is endangered, and Christian, (that is, *Church*) education discouraged, and that concession to popery, the bitterest foe of the civil and religious freedom of Irishmen, has been carried to an undue length, and praying for the restoration of Mr. Watson and the protection of Protestants and protestant institutions."

The administration are engaged in establishing the colleges contemplated for Ireland. Cork, Belfast and Galway are spoken of as locations. This project has failed to unite even the papists in its favour. The Romish prelates are utterly divided in regard to it; fifteen are for, and nine against it. "Murray of Dublin, and Crolley of Armagh are willing to co-operate in carrying the parliamentary enactment into effect, but McHob of Tuam, and Cartwell of Meath, repudiate all connexion with it as utterly dangerous to religion and morality." In the mean time, it is highly probable that the Orange institution will be again set on foot, perhaps in a form somewhat modified, so as to evade the objections heretofore brought against it.

Germany.—The new reformation continues its career, and, of course, more active manifestations of hostility against it may be expected. Prussia has, unexpectedly, followed the example of Austria, and the other popish powers, in putting legal restraints upon the diffusion of the new doctrines. Their preachers are not to be admitted into the protestant churches; and even the papers, except a few which have special license to do so, are forbidden to write about the new movement. On

* The Treasurer of the Foreign Missionary fund, appointed by Synod, is Hugh Glassford, New York City, to whom remittances, in aid of that fund, are to be made.—Ed.